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INTEGRATION AND THE UNDESCENDED SOUL IN PLOTINUS.

“Since I should be bold enough to speak more clearly what seems to me to be true contrary to the opinions of others, even our human soul has not entirely sunk, but there is some aspect of it for ever in the intelligible world” (*Enn.*, IV, 8, 8, 1-3).

Plotinus speaks in this tone nowhere else in the *Enneads*. The tone betokens the extreme importance he attaches to the doctrine, here for the first time expounded,¹ that something of the soul remains above in the intelligible world. *Ennead* IV, 8 is number six in Porphyry’s chronological list.

“If we are told that the soul of man is tripartite and that since it is composite it will be dissolved,² we shall say that when pure souls are released they will put away everything that has been fastened to them at birth, but that the others will live with this longer.”³

This text, one of the very few in the *Enneads* to refer clearly to the famous Platonic doctrine of the tripartite soul, is from *Ennead*, IV, 7, 14, 8 ff. *Ennead* IV, 7 is number two in Porphyry’s chronological list. Plotinus is apparently explaining the simplicity of the soul in the terms of the tenth book of Plato’s *Republic* where Plato compares the highest element of the soul to the sea-god Glaucus who needs to have his barnacles and seaweed stripped off in order to appear in his pristine splendour and simplicity. Similarly the highest part of the soul ($\tauὸ\lambdaογιστικόν$) must divest itself of the two lower elements it has taken on at birth. Plotinus refers to this passage of the *Republic* again in I, 1, 12, the last but one of the treatises, but this time, although considering once again the problem of whether the soul is composite, he makes no mention whatever of tripartition.

The series of problems we wish to consider arises from Plotinus’ apparent unwillingness to take very much notice of

¹ Cf. II, 9, 2, 4; III, 8, 5, 10; IV, 8, 4, 3; 3, 12, 5; V, 1, 10.

² The text is corrupt at this point but the basic sense is clear and the reference to tripartition certain. See Henry and Schwyzer’s *apparatus criticus*.

³ Reading $\piλεῖον$ for $\piλεῖστον$ with Harder.

the tripartition of the soul.⁴ They are as follows: What is the relation of the Plotinian “soul above” to the *λογιστικόν* part of the soul in Plato? If Plotinus tacitly dropped tripartition was it because his own doubts of its adequacy are in fact confirmed by a hesitancy (if not a series of contradictions) he could observe in the text of Plato himself?⁵ And if Plotinus changed the Platonic doctrines, even unwittingly, why did he do so? Above all why is he so comparatively strident in IV, 8 when introducing his novel opinion “contrary to the opinions of others” that the whole soul does not descend?

Whatever his views on the subject of the tripartition in the *Laws*,⁶ Plato nowhere repudiates the doctrine which he expounds at length especially in the *Republic*, *Phaedrus*, and *Timaeus*. Interpreters have long disputed how Plato reconciled this theory with the earlier view of the *Phaedo* that the soul is pre-eminently simple (78C).⁷ Taylor had long ago indicated the area in which a solution to this could be found.⁸ Discussing the comparison of the souls of both men and Gods to a charioteer and two horses, and with particular reference to the word *συμφύτω* in the phrase *ἐσικέτω δὴ συμφύτω δυνάμει ὑποπτέρουν ζεύγους τε καὶ ἡνόχον* (*Phaedr.*, 246C), he observes that “Συμφύτω here should mean, as the word regularly does in Plato, literally *concretae*, ‘grown together into

⁴ Apart from IV, 7, 14, 8 ff., tripartition (or at least the three elements *τὸ λογιζόμενον*, *τὸ θυμούμενον*, and *τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν*) occurs at I, 2, 1, 18-20—a passage which seems to be merely a repetition of school doctrine (cf. Albinus, *Didasc.*, 29). We find tripartition again (also in a discussion of ethics) at III, 6, 2, 26-32, while the discussion in III, 6, 2 itself is referred to at III, 6, 4, 4. Tripartition is mentioned, though not employed, at VI, 1, 12, 6, while the distinction between *τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν* and *τὸ θυμοειδές* is criticized at IV, 4, 28, 63 ff.

Dr. H. Blumenthal, who has discussed these passages in detail in an unpublished Cambridge dissertation on Plotinus’ psychology, rightly concludes that Plotinus rejects tripartition as a basis for serious psychology.

⁵ On the general subject of Plotinus’ attitude towards such “contradictions” see J. M. Rist, *Eros and Psyche* (Toronto, 1964).

⁶ Cf. D. A. Rees, “Bipartition of the Soul in the Early Academy,” *J. H. S.*, LXXVII (1957), p. 112.

⁷ Cf. especially W. K. C. Guthrie, “Plato’s Views on the Immortality of the Soul,” *Entretiens Hardt*, III (1955), pp. 4-22.

⁸ *Plato: The Man and His Work* (Paperback edition, London, 1960), p. 307.

one.' It is inserted in order to insist on the *unity* of the individual mind (does Taylor mean 'soul'?). We are to think of the driver and his horses as a single organism." Plato continues by remarking that the horses and the charioteer of the souls of the Gods are wholly good, that is, that goodness is the unity and bond of the soul.⁹

If the idea that goodness is the unifying bond of the soul is developed and if its full implications are brought out, it will be found to conflict with the tripartition theory as Plato normally expounds it. The classic text for Plato's opinions of the ultimate simplicity of the soul is *Republic*, 612A, the passage about Glaucon. When the sea-god (the soul) is cleaned up, we shall see whether its essential nature is simple or manifold ($\epsilon\ddot{\imath}\tau\epsilon$ πολυειδῆς εἴτε μονοειδῆς). There is no doubt as to Plato's view here: the soul is essentially simple and appears manifold only because of being involved in the cycle of births and deaths.¹⁰ The essential soul, that is, is obscured by the lower elements derived from the body. This view, it should be added, is the foundation of the doctrine of the *Timaeus* that the highest element, the immortal λογιστικόν, now called *νοῦς*, is situated in the head while the merely mortal parts are in the chest and abdomen (69 E ff.), and ultimately also for the tendency of the Academy (doubtless represented by Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1102a28 ff.) that in the soul can be distinguished two elements, a rational and an irrational.

According to the doctrine of the tripartite soul it is the highest element, called both $\tau\circ$ λογιστόν and *νοῦς* which is immortal, which is the pure gold buried in the dross of the bodily aspects of soul, which is pre-eminently simple. Presumably therefore *νοῦς* or $\tau\circ$ λογιστικόν cannot sin and is the good of the soul. It is because of the unsullied intellect that Plato can echo the Socratic view and say in the *Timaeus* "No one is willingly bad" (*Tim.*, 86D).¹¹ Yet all this does not fully accord with what we have seen in the *Phaedrus* myth; there it turned out to be not the charioteer ($\tau\circ$ λογιστικόν) who was the unifying factor of goodness, but that there is a goodness permeating both the charioteer and his

⁹ Cf. Guthrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14; Rist, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

¹⁰ Cf. Guthrie, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

¹¹ Cf. *Prot.*, 358C, etc.

horses yet in some way transcendent over both of them. In other words the problem is as follows: Does Plato hold that “pure and essential soul” is $\tauὸ\ λογιστικόν$, one of the “parts” of the tripartite soul? Or is tripartition itself an arrangement which is transcended by the true soul (or self?)?

There are other considerations which complicate the problem further. We know from the myth of Er that there are utterly corrupted souls; we know from the *Laws* that certain criminals are past all reform (854E); in the *Gorgias* when the naked souls are judged in the underworld, if they have been involved in heinous crimes during their life on earth, these crimes leave their scars which, presumably, cannot be obliterated (524E). These souls too are often incurable; punishment in the underworld is inflicted as a warning to others (525C).

There is a difference then between the naked soul, that is, the soul free from the body, and the essential soul, which is $\tauὸ\ λογιστικόν$ or $\nuοῦς$. Although all evil is in some sense involuntary, yet some souls are incurable! If evil is ultimately involuntary there must be a part of the soul which is free of it, and this presumably would be the god-like $\lambda\lambdaογιστικόν$; if souls are incurable, however, this godlike element can become so marked by evil that its essential character is changed. Presumably in the case of the incurable sinner Plato would have to say that $\tauὸ\ λογιστικόν$ is damaged and has sinned. There is an underlying lack of clarity here. Plato does not commit himself finally as to whether the essential aspect of the soul can sin.

We must now return to the other problem: what is this essential aspect of the soul? According to the theory of tripartition all cognitive aspects of the soul are classed under $\tauὸ\ λογιστικόν$, but in the *Republic* itself there is a discussion of modes of knowing which might make us wonder about how seriously Plato would take such a classification. In the divided line section of book six Plato distinguishes, among other things, between $\deltaιάνοια$ and $\nuόησις$.¹² $\mathbf{Nόησις}$ operates with Forms alone; $\deltaιάνοια$ is compelled to use verbal or sensible examples. Clearly error cannot arise at the level of $\nuόησις$; it can however arise at the level of $\deltaιάνοια$. Within the division $\tauὸ\ λογιστικόν$, therefore, we can

¹² See now D. Gallop, “Image and Reality in Plato’s *Republic*,” *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, XLVII (1965), pp. 119-24.

distinguish a more and a less perfect faculty. If this is so, then the notion of a tripartite division of the soul is at the least misleading, for the really important division of the soul must surely be between the pure and the corruptible, the infallible and the fallible. Perhaps one should determine, as Plato did not, that *νοῦς* and *τὸ λογιστικόν* should not be identified—as they seem to be in the theory of tripartition where the *λογιστικόν* of the *Republic* is apparently to be identified with the *νοῦς* of the *Timaeus*. What would happen if a later thinker developed a theory along these lines?

Plato is not a mystic if a mystic is someone who either desires union with God, or who identifies himself with God, or who identifies himself with the external world, or who attempts to isolate the pure soul from all things.¹³ But in a number of important respects his philosophical predicament can be compared with that of the mystic. One of these respects affects our present problem. If a man sins, according to the myth of Er and other Platonic writings, he may be reincarnated at a lower level: a bad man will be reincarnated as a woman, a woman as a beast, Thersites as an ape. But how, we may ask, is it possible ever to reascend the scale? How can the soul in the beast return to being human? If it is in a beast it will presumably be beastly. A humane tiger is hard to conceive. And Plato himself admits that some souls are irredeemable. It almost seems as though the errors of one life will doom many men for eternity; their souls will be perpetually scarred. It would seem as though if a soul is ever to reascend in the hierarchy of life it must possess an unsullied phase or part. Such a part would certainly be *θεῖον*, and godly in its intuitive possession of knowledge. It would not have to be identified with the reasoning element in man, since it would exclude any faculty liable to error. It would have to be a second self, lying behind the empirical ego of, perhaps, three parts. Plato, who certainly holds at times that there is an essential, pure and sinless soul, never takes this further step of dissociating it from the tripartite soul of normal life, though his use of the word *γένος* (class) instead of *μέρος* (part) for the phases of the soul in the *Timaeus* (e.g. at 69D)

¹³ For these varieties see R. C. Zaehner, *Mysticism, Sacred and Profane* (Oxford, 1957).

may be a move in this direction. It seems likely, however, that it was his own theory of tripartition which prevented him from taking the further step.

Plotinus' doctrine that part of the soul remains above was recognized as novel and widely believed to be unplatonic. It is a "new theory" according to Proclus,¹⁴ and Proclus, Damascius, and Hermias all recognize it as peculiar to Plotinus.¹⁵ Hermias argues against it on the grounds that the Ideal State of the *Republic* would last forever if the souls of the Guardians did not descend. We must assume from this, he believes, that the doctrine is unplatonic and that in Plato's view the charioteer, the highest aspect of soul according to the *Phaedrus*, is subject to evil (*κακύνεοθαι*). This probably is the position of the *Phaedrus*, though Plato leaves the matter there somewhat ambiguous, as our earlier discussion has led us to expect. In human souls, Plato thinks, the evil horse will weigh the charioteer down (*ρέπων τε καὶ βαρύνων*) unless he trains him well. But it is not certain how the metaphor of weighing down should be cashed. Obviously it means that humans sin; but it is not certain that it means that the charioteer actually consents to sin, as the adversaries of Plotinus must have taken it. Indeed such a view would flatly oppose the dictum that "no one is bad willingly." Again Plato's problem: Is sin a deliberately and fully recognized act of the will or is it an obscuration of a higher self? The former interpretation is in opposition to that of Plotinus and is best summed up by Iamblichus: *εἰ δὲ προαιρεούσι ἀμαρτάνει, πῶς ἀναμάρτητος η̄ ψυχή;*¹⁶ For Iamblichus a deliberate choice, a deliberate act of the will, is involved.

We noticed at the beginning of this discussion the striking way in which Plotinus introduces his novel doctrine of the soul above "contrary to the opinions of others." We have now examined something of the situation which underlies that doctrine as it is revealed in the writings of Plato. And we have seen how Hermias appeals to the *Phaedrus* against Plotinus' view. If we now turn to *Ennead*, II, 9, 2, we see what is unmistakably the language of the *Phaedrus* being used by Plotinus to reject the normal interpretation of the *Phaedrus* if not the

¹⁴ *In Tim.*, III, 323, 5 (Diehl).

¹⁵ Cf. Henry and Schwyzer's references to IV, 8, 8.

¹⁶ *Apud Proclum, In Tim.*, III, 334, 7.

Phaedrus itself. Plotinus has distinguished three aspects of the soul—though these aspects are not necessarily to be taken as Platonic parts. He calls them the upper, the middle, and the lower. When the lower is dragged down it sometimes drags the middle down with it, but, continues Plotinus solemnly, “It is not in the nature of things for the whole soul to be dragged down.” This is certainly the *language* of the *Phaedrus*, but the doctrine is different. For Plato the charioteer of the human soul can be dragged down (though we observed that that phrase is ambiguous); for Plotinus the upper phase cannot be dragged down.

What are the three phases of the soul in II, 9, 2? They do not appear to correspond to the Platonic parts. Leaving the “upper soul” aside for a moment we can identify the middle phase with what Plotinus calls $\tauὸ\lambdaογιστικόν$ at III, 6, 2, 22. This $\lambdaογιστικόν$ is not what Plato calls $\nuοῦς$; nor is it the Plotinian $\nuοῦς$; it is from $\nuοῦς$ ($\piαρὰ\tauοῦ\nuοῦ$, III, 6, 2, 31). The sharp distinction, therefore, between $\nuοῦς$ and $\tauὸ\lambdaογιστικόν$ in Plotinus must be recognized. It is drawn clearly again in V, 3, 3, 23 ff., parts of which deserve quotation at some length: “We shall not say that $\nuοῦς$ is part of the soul (understood as $\tauὸ\lambdaογιστικόν$ plus the lower phases), but we will speak of ‘our $\nuοῦς$ ’ . . . It is ours and not ours . . . For we are not $\nuοῦς$, therefore we operate according to $\nuοῦς$ ($κατ’\epsilonκένο$) by our primary $\lambdaογιστικόν$. . . We ourselves are discursive reasoners and we think our thoughts in our understanding ($\deltaάνοια$).

The $\muέσον$ of II, 9, 2, therefore, is $\tauὸ\lambdaογιστικόν$, $\deltaάνοια$; perhaps it is the second type of knowing faculty recognized by Plato in the Divided Line. And the lower element of II, 9, 2 is therefore all the rest of the soul’s phases, sensation, the faculty of desire, of reproduction, of nourishment. There is no need to assume that the lower element consists of any clearly defined number of parts or faculties. Plotinus is capable of using Platonic, Aristotelian, or any other distinctions here as he sees fit. If there were a tripartite division of the soul in Plotinus, therefore, with $\tauὸ\lambdaογιστικόν$ at the top, it would be *below* the level of the upper soul which is eternally in contact with $\nuοῦς$ in contemplation. Later philosophers of Neoplatonic inclination, such as Avicenna, make such a doctrine explicit.¹⁷

¹⁷ Cf. Zaehner, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

We can now understand why IV, 7, 14, 11 (a part of one of the very earliest of Plotinus' writings, as we saw) is one of the very few specific references to the Platonic tripartition of the soul in the *Enneads*. In that section Plotinus has to allude to the doctrine of the *Republic* that the sea-god Glaucus, representing $\tau\ddot{o}\lambda\omega\gamma\sigma\tau\kappa\kappa\acute{o}\nu$, is the pure upper soul. But this view turns out to be inconvenient for Plotinus' philosophy as a whole, where he wishes to use $\tau\ddot{o}\lambda\omega\gamma\sigma\tau\kappa\kappa\acute{o}\nu$ in a different way and with different ends in view. To speak of the upper, the middle, and the lower soul, as in II, 9, 2, is more satisfactory, because these phrases may be used to refer to indefinite numbers of parts or faculties. The lower soul may include, for example, the Platonic $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\theta\gamma\mu\gamma\tau\kappa\kappa\acute{o}\nu$ and $\theta\gamma\mu\gamma\epsilon\iota\delta\acute{\epsilon}\gamma$, or again the totality of the faculties of the non-rational soul of Aristotle.

In an analysis of the phases of the soul, such as we find in *Ennead*, V, 3, 3, little is made of the importance of the distinction between the upper soul and the rest, but in II, 9, 2, IV, 8, 8, and elsewhere this distinction is all important. This is the essence of Plotinus' "novel theory" and he must have had a very good reason for introducing it. In fact although the reason is apparent to the reader of the *Enneads* Plotinus nowhere makes it explicit. It is a doctrine which must originate in Plotinus' confidence, based on personal mystical experience, that a return to the sources of the soul, to *Nōs* and to One, is possible for every soul. For such a return to excellence is possible in Plotinus, as in Plato, by the soul's own efforts. The soul needs no further help from the One, or from Gods or saviours (III, 2, 8-9) to enable it to return, for it has been generated from eternity with the necessary powers within itself. Yet although Plato, like Plotinus, thinks that man can be "saved" by his own efforts, he fails to make clear on what psychological theory such a doctrine is based. In Plotinus, however, the psychological theory is made explicit: it is the theory of the undescended part of the soul. If man can identify his empirical self, his ego, which, according to V, 3, 3, is fundamentally his $\lambda\omega\gamma\sigma\tau\kappa\kappa\acute{o}\nu$, but which Plotinus more usually thinks of as the combination of the $\lambda\omega\gamma\sigma\tau\kappa\kappa\acute{o}\nu$ and the lower phases—if he can identify this ego with his upper soul, then his newly integrated personality will enjoy the contemplation of the *Nōs* and the possibility of the return to the One which the upper soul always enjoys.

For in Plotinus' view it is a psychological fact that there are many phases of our psychological make-up which continue to function without our being aware of them (IV, 8, 8, 7). It is only when the particular phase is brought into union with the "whole soul" that we become aware of its operations.

When speaking in the tenth book of the *Republic* of the uncovering of Glaucon, the revealing of the pure soul, Plato has in mind a doctrine of what we might call two selves, an empirical and an eternal self, but he has not succeeded, as we have seen, in integrating this view with his whole psychological outlook, or at least in explaining that outlook unambiguously. Plotinus, on the other hand, is in no doubt here and we shall speak from now on therefore of his "empirical self" (to be identified with the everyday conscious personality) and of his "second self," his "soul above." In V, 3, 3, as we have seen, Plotinus holds that the "we" in us is normally to be thought of as the rational-discursive element, but he makes it clear that we can identify this element either with the Intelligible World, presumably through identity with the "soul above," or with any of the lower phases or images of soul, beginning with the power of sense-perception. Naturally our happiness will depend on the identifications we make. Just as union with the One, the power which is creative of finite being, is the highest joy, so union with the non-being of matter is the ultimate misery.

Before considering this union or integration we should look briefly at a few more texts in which the two selves are discussed and where Plotinus points out that the guide to the importance of an activity is by no means merely our consciousness of it. In V, 3, 9 he refers to our "second self" as a "first soul," but his normal mode of reference is to an "inner" and an "outer" man. Throughout sections IV, 3, 30-2 the theme is discussed. The doctrine of IV, 8 that the upper soul functions continually in the intelligible world, though we are not always aware of it, occurs again in IV, 3, 30: "Thinking is different from awareness of thinking, for we think (*νοούμεν*) continually but are not continually aware of thinking." And indeed in section 31 Plotinus speaks of "each soul," as though we were dealing not merely with phases of a soul, but with two entities different in kind but which are able to harmonize with one another. And

in chapter 32 we find the lower soul distinguished by name. Finally this section distinguishes two Herculeses—a favourite *topos* of Plotinus: “That Hercules would speak of his feats, but the other man is he who considers all these as petty, who is translated to a holier place, who has become a member of the Intelligible World and got beyond Hercules by strength in the contests of the wise.” This “Hercules beyond” is the soul integrated with its higher self.¹⁸

If Plotinus tends towards speaking of two souls in some treatises, elsewhere he prefers the terminology of the inner and outer man. If Socrates joins in childish activities he does so in the “outer Socrates,” we read at III, 2, 15, 58. And discussing the place of friendship in the life of the wise man, Plotinus tells us that sometimes friendship is natural to the inner man (*δὲ ἔδον ἀνθρώπος*, I, 1, 10, 15). That there is a second self, an inner man, a soul above, being clear, and the need for its existence in Plotinus’ scheme being demonstrated, it remains for us to consider the relation of the two selves (bearing in mind Plato’s views on the subject) and in particular to examine this relation in the case of the best soul, the soul of the philosopher. For it is both our duty and our advantage to raise our souls to this level. A brief look at parts of *Ennead*, I, 4, *On Happiness*, is therefore required.

In Plotinus’ system as a whole the Intelligible World is the world of reality, of true being, while matter is non-being, nothingness, privation of being. In the sphere of morals it follows that the assimilation of the self to the Intelligible World is marked by virtue (“Without true virtue ‘God’ on the lips is a mere word,” II, 9, 15, 39-40), while a perverse longing for assimilation with matter, that is, in fact, with non-being, leads to vice.¹⁹ For our present purposes we are only concerned with virtue; and the philosopher who possesses true virtue can be seen in I, 4 as the happy man who has integrated his empirical self with the higher soul. All men are potentially or actually happy (I, 4, 4, 9 ff.). This means, for Plotinus, that all men possess the second self, but while in the majority this second

¹⁸ Cf. I, 1, 12, 31 ff.; IV, 3, 27, 23.

¹⁹ Cf. J. M. Rist, “Plotinus on Matter and Evil,” *Phronesis*, VI (1961), pp. 154-66.

self is only part (*μέρος*) of their total psychological make-up, in the case of the philosopher the ego has become identified with or perhaps integrated with the higher soul. It has become the higher self in actuality (*ἐνεργείᾳ ἐστὶ τοῦτο*), says Plotinus. What exactly does he mean by this? What kind of integration does he refer to? The answer is given in the following sentence. When this integration is achieved the lower elements become as garments lying about the upper soul; they are now recognized as wholly inessential and really are inessential. They can no longer be called parts of the soul (*μέρη*), since they clothe the true self without any act of will on its part. They are the pure accidents of earthly life.

Integration then seems to change the status of the empirical self—or, more accurately, it enables a man to see the correct status of that self in the ordinary life of everyday humanity and to form in himself a new “self,” a self realized by identification with the upper soul. Such identification is the felt realization of immortality, of the goodness of Providence, of the existence in eternal reality of the world of Forms. Presumably man can still lose this new-found integration during human life, for in Plotinus’ view the Stoics were wrong to suppose that the sage could not sin, but obviously the fully integrated self is unlikely to degenerate and will reach heaven (if we may use the word metaphorically to show the emotional force of the theory) if he dies in this holy state.

One possible misconception should be cleared up. When the human ego is reformed and integration with the second self takes place, Plotinus does not teach that the goal of mysticism has been attained. The emergence of the true personality of man is not, as in certain Indian systems, an isolation of the immortal soul apart from all things. It is, as we have seen, the felt realization of immortality and a partaking in the Intelligible World. These two, however, are inextricably bound up together, and since the soul is then in contact with the intelligible world it will enjoy non-discursive knowledge and understanding of the nature of all things. Such understanding will involve an understanding of the utter dependence of all things on the One as first cause. Hence integration of the personality will mean not the isolation of the soul as a monad, but the

placing of the soul on the upward path to union with the One. Integration is an earlier step, and in Plotinus' world each upward step leads to another until the goal of union with the One is reached. "Anyone not of the strength to lay hold of the first Soul, that possessing pure intellect, must grasp that which has to do with our ordinary thinking and thence ascend: if even this proves too hard, let him turn to account the sensitive phase which carries the ideal forms of the less fine degree, that phase which, too, with its powers, is immaterial and lies just within the realm of Ideal-principles. One may even, if it seems necessary, begin as low as the reproductive Soul and its very production and thence make the ascent, mounting from these ultimate ideal principles to the ultimates in the highest sense, that is to the primals" (V, 3, 9, 30-5, trans. MacKenna-Page).

Full recognition of the second self then is not a static situation but an entry on the road to the One. Yet it is a vital step, perhaps indeed *the* vital step which the sage must take. It is such recognition which primarily distinguishes the wise man from the ordinary mass of humanity.

Now that we see what Plotinus means by his "upper soul" and how we are to understand identification with it we may add a few reflections on the idea of the naked soul. The theme is Platonic and by Plotinus' times had become traditional. Often in the traditional versions we hear of the stripping off of tunics which have accumulated around the soul, sometimes during its descent through the planetary spheres.²⁰ In Plotinus' treatise *On Happiness* (I, 4), as we have seen, we find the doctrine that when the ego is re-integrated with the upper soul all the lower parts become as it were garments draped about the self during earthly life, but irrelevant and recognized as irrelevant to its true nature. We can now see one reason why in a famous passage of I, 6, 7 Plotinus compares the ascent of the soul to the process of initiation into a mystery religion. The soul, he says, must divest itself of the clothing it has put on during its descent and must return to the Good its source, just as the initiates of the mysteries strip themselves naked before entering the holy of holies. Such ceremonial stripping is a widespread

²⁰ Cf. P. Wendland, "Das Gewand der Eitelkeit," *Hermes*, LI (1916), pp. 481-5.

custom, quite unrelated, of course, to the orgies of immoral cults; it signifies the casting off of the old man. But clothes cannot be cast off unless they are recognized as clothes; and the lower phases of the soul cannot cease to trouble the wise man until he realizes that they are lower. When the devotee of the mysteries is living in the outside world, his clothes are as it were the badge of life at a secular level; when he enters the sanctuary and divests himself of them he is "alone with the Alone" with his God. Similarly the soul of the mystic, once fully integrated and by itself or "naked," will progress to the One. His soul will not be scarred, like those of the evildoers in the *Gorgias*, but pure and whole.

Finally let us summarize Plotinus' position, for the theories discussed in this paper are some of his most important contributions to ancient thought and deserve much wider recognition than they have been accorded hitherto. There is a second self in all men, above the empirical level, which functions regardless of the activities at that level. The second self is eternally in contact with the intelligible world. It is the aim of the philosopher to reorientate his empirical self in accordance with this second self. If he achieves this end he can recognize his immortality, understand the nature of his unintegrated empirical ego and proceed to the ultimate union with the One. It seems highly likely that Plato, with his problems about whether the soul is essentially simple or multiform, was groping towards a position of this sort. As so often Plotinus was the man able to read Plato's intentions behind the apparently conflicting statements in the dialogues. That Plotinus saw further than Plato in these matters is certain; that he saw further in the same direction is, to my mind, equally certain.

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